

Poverty in the American Metropolis

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Pre-requisites: Intro to Sociology

Target: Upper-division sociology course; cross listed with other
behavioral sciences

Course Goal and Objectives

- ▶ To generate discussion and provide more clarity to the causes of urban poverty in the United States
 - ▶ To highlight the lived experience and consequences of poverty in the metropolis, with a particular emphasis on place and space
 - ▶ To engage critically with social policy interventions aimed at ameliorating poverty
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Poverty: Introduction and Overview

- ▶ Descriptives:
 - What is poverty?
 - Who is poor?
 - How do we measure it?
 - ▶ Concentrations of poverty and the urban context
 - Suburbanization of poverty
 - ▶ Myths regarding the causes of poverty
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Slums and Racial Segregation in the United States

- ▶ Constructing the ghetto
 - ▶ Early US studies
 - Chicago School
 - ▶ Colored properties
 - Policies and practice
 - ▶ The race/poverty connection through housing
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Economic Transformation, Globalization, and the Labor Market

- ▶ Wilson and The Truly Disadvantaged
 - Concentration effect, joblessness
- ▶ Globalization
 - Deregulation and Financialization
 - Immigration and the global city
 - The new joblessness

Financing the Poor: From Exclusion to Extraction

- ▶ Dual credit markets
 - FHA and inner city financing
 - Fannie and Freddie
- ▶ The “democratization” of credit
 - Securitization
 - Selling the risk
 - Forms of predation
 - Payday lending
 - Subprime
 - Loan modifications

Poverty, Space, and Neighborhood Effects

- ▶ The geography of opportunity structures
 - Where do you live?
 - Place Matters
 - Distribution of social goods
 - Impact on life outcomes
 - MTO

Race, Class, and Urban (Mis)education Systems

- ▶ Education as the equalizer?
- ▶ Ideology
 - Boot straps and meritocracy
 - Mobility
 - A tale of two schools

Crime, Policing and Incarceration in the Metropolis

- ▶ The rise of incarceration
 - From school to prison
 - Space-based policing
 - Zero-tolerance
- ▶ Who's in jail?
- ▶ Effects on life chances
 - The New Jim Crow
 - Employment, housing, family
- ▶ The CBA of incarceration

Partnership, Family, and Managing Private Life

- ▶ Income inequality → Family structure
 - Community contexts and the sex ratio
 - “Eligible” men for marriage
 - Economic barriers to marriage
- ▶ Family structure → Income inequality
 - Making Ends Meet (as a single mom)
- ▶ Unequal childhoods
 - Cultural component to childrearing by class
 - Parenting in the hood

The Future Poverty as Prospective Process

- ▶ Distressed cities as collective poverty
 - Predatory municipal finance
 - Unfunded liability
 - ▶ The defended community
 - “Sacrifice zone” planning for the public good
 - School closures and privatization of education
 - ▶ Sustainable Communities
 - Regional equity or market segmentation
 - fragmentation
 - The illusion of inclusion
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